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A STUDY OF THE EFFECT OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE ON
LEADERSHIP PRACTICES WITHIN DEFENSE AGENCIES

BY

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**A Study of the Effect of Organizational Culture on Leadership Practices Within
Defense Agencies**

by

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ABSTRACT

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The Department of Defense is currently undergoing rapid and significant changes. Many of these changes are a direct result of the current Administration's goal to create a government that works better and costs less, commonly referred to as reinvention. Over the years, DoD has often been used as an example of organizational inefficiency. One way to combat this image is to closely examine the relationship between organizational culture, military leadership style, and bureaucratic form in an effort to develop recommendations for organizational improvement.

Within Department of Defense Agencies, there are two general styles of management: military leadership and bureaucratic (non-military). Each brings an array of approaches, with both positive and negative aspects, to managing people, projects, and organizations, and each style has distinct advantages and disadvantages. An overall stable defense culture is difficult to sustain due to the often incongruent goals pursued by the military and civilian components. In particular, military leaders assigned to bureaucratic organizations are confronted with the need to adapt their style in order to succeed. The clash between the bureaucratic approach to solving a business problem and a military officer's leadership frame of reference often contributes to organizational inefficiencies.

Cultural awareness of military and civilian differences can play a central role in a leader's ability to understand and cooperate with others in an effort to improve organizational efficiency and effectiveness. Organizations are full of examples of misunderstandings, primarily caused by the parties involved filtering interactions through their own "narrow" perspectives.

This research paper examines the close relationship between organizational culture, military leadership, and bureaucracy. As civilian organizations continue to downsize and military leaders continue to be assigned to senior leadership positions, it is critical for leadership to acknowledge and value the diversity of the human element and to develop and care for their subordinates, both military and civilian. Developing a better understanding of the relationship between organizational culture, military leadership, and bureaucracy could enable military leaders of defense agencies to enhance organizational efficiency and effectiveness.

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A STUDY OF THE EFFECT OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE ON LEADERSHIP PRACTICES WITHIN DEFENSE AGENCIES

The Department of Defense is currently undergoing rapid and significant changes. Many of these changes are a direct result of the current Administration's goal to "create a government that works better and costs less,"¹ commonly referred to as reinvention. Over the years, DoD has often been used as an example of organizational inefficiency. One way to combat this image is to closely examine the relationship between organizational culture, military leadership style, and bureaucratic form in an effort to develop recommendations for organizational improvement. Taken together, a better understanding of the relationship among these factors could enable defense agencies to enhance their organizational efficiency and effectiveness.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Within Department of Defense Agencies, there are two general styles of management: military leadership and bureaucratic (non-military). Each brings an array of approaches, with both positive and negative aspects, to managing people, projects, and organizations, and each style has distinct advantages and disadvantages. An overall stable defense culture is difficult to sustain due to the often incongruent goals pursued by the military and civilian components. In particular, military leaders assigned to bureaucratic organizations are confronted with the need to adapt their style in order to succeed. The clash between the bureaucratic approach to solving a business problem and a military officer's leadership frame of reference often contributes to organizational inefficiencies.

The specific questions to be addressed in this study are as follows:

1. What major organizational factors significantly influence defense agency effectiveness?
2. Are military and civilian leadership practices fundamentally different?
3. Can organizational effectiveness be improved by understanding the differences between military-oriented and civilian-oriented bureaucracies?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study focuses on the relationship among organizational culture, military leadership practices, and bureaucratic structure. The Department of Defense will benefit from this study because defense agency officials (civilians and military) will have a greater understanding of how organizational culture, leadership, and bureaucratic structure interrelate. This new knowledge will enable both military and civilian officials to be more effective within their organizations.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study provides an independent review and analysis of some of the factors affecting the ability of a defense agency to be effective. By examining these factors, this study can 1) illustrate how organizational culture and structure influence leadership styles, 2) provide defense agencies with a better

appreciation of both civilian and military leadership styles, and 3) suggest some ways to modify leadership practices to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of military-civilian bureaucracies. This research will serve to heighten awareness of military and civilian cultural differences.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

There have been numerous books, magazine articles, and journals written on organizational culture, military leadership, and bureaucracy. This literature review highlights some of the information available which link these factors together.

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

If one accepts the idea of combining selected traits to model a leader's personality, then an organization's culture can be described as simply the reflection of its personality. "Organizations are different creatures to different people and this phenomenon is unavoidable, thus, organizations are defined according to the contexts and perspectives of the person doing the defining."² For the purposes of this research, the author is the person defining the organizational culture. "Culture: a pattern of basic assumptions – invented, discovered, or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration – that has worked well enough to be considered valued, and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems."³

Just as one peels away the layers of an onion skin, one can also peel away the layers composing an organization's culture. The outermost layer is made up of the most easily observable creations and artifacts. "One can look at physical space, the technological output of the group, its written and spoken language, artistic productions, and the overt behavior of its members whereas it is easy to observe artifacts – even subtle ones, such as the way in which status is demonstrated by members – the difficult part is figuring out what the artifacts mean, how they interrelate, what deeper patterns, if any, they reflect."⁴ To better understand the meaning behind these artifacts – symbols, rituals, documents, behavior, etc. – one must discover the day-to-day operating principles that underlie human behavior.

The next layer is the organization's values. "Values define what is right and wrong; what is important and what is unimportant; what is beautiful and what is not...the importance of basic values is to show what is rewarded and what is sanctioned in the organization."⁵ Attention to values has become increasingly important lately. There are numerous reasons for this shift in attitude. Robert Haas, Chief Executive Officer, LEVI Strauss, says it best, "because in a more dynamic business environment, people's attitudes and behavior must be guided by a shared commitment to the business, instead of by obedience to traditional managerial authority...Values provide a common language for aligning a company's leadership with its people."⁶

The innermost layer contains peoples' basic assumptions. Assumptions underlie behavior. "...the implicit assumptions that actually guide behavior, that tell group members how to perceive, think

about, and feel about things...basic assumptions like theories-in-use, tend to be nonconfrontable and nondebatable."⁷

The assumptions of any organization can often be traced back through its history. Whether the organization is brand-new or a century old, the way it behaves is rooted in the organization's core cultural assumptions. "Over a period of time, an organization, much like an individual, becomes characterized by certain modes of behavior that are perceived as its style....In this process, the organization is infused with a system of values that reflects its history and the people who have played vital roles in its formation and growth."⁸

LEADERSHIP

There are probably as many definitions of leadership as there are leadership gurus or experts. In Making a Difference: 12 Qualities That Make You a Leader, Sheila Bethel writes "...to make a difference and to be effective leaders, we have to influence others to think and to act, as well as to follow. We must set an example that others choose to follow. And the secret to eliciting that choice is the very essence of leadership."⁹ Creating the desire in the employee to want to accomplish the task is a critical part of effective leadership.

Since the ultimate goal of a leader is to accomplish tasks through the efforts of other people, it makes sense to focus on both sides of the performance equation: the task itself and the human resource. The Scientific Management movement emphasized the task portion of the equation. One method employed to induce task completion was the use of monetary incentives. By primarily focusing on the task, the role of the leader concerned itself with the organization first, sometimes at the expense of the people. Perhaps in response to the neglected human element in this process, the Human Relations movement asserted that in addition to the technological best practices, management needed to pay more attention to the human side of the equation. One of Elton Mayo's major findings during the Hawthorne experiments at Western Electric revealed that the role of the leader was to enable individuals to achieve group goals and facilitate individual development. Balancing these two sides of the equation has been and will continue to be a leader's greatest challenge.

"Two great factors underlie all we know about Army leadership: accomplishment of the mission, and the welfare of the men. Mission and men. Leaders are always working with these two basic factors. Whenever and wherever possible, a leader tries to balance so that the needs of the mission and the needs of the men are both met."¹⁰

During the late 1980s, a branch of the Defense Logistics Agency located in Columbus, Ohio adopted the motto --Mission First-People Always--. In retrospect, this saying -published by a largely civilian agency- was describing the military leader's desire to achieve the mission while keeping the needs of the employees in mind.

While a number of leadership theories exist, the major schools of organizational theory consist of the following approaches: trait, attitudinal, and situational. The trait approach to leadership attempts to

identify which personal characteristics found in a leader will promote success. There have been relatively few consistent or significant discoveries. As a result of a five year study of ninety leaders and followers, Warren Bennis has identified the following four shared leader characteristics:

1. Management of attention: The ability to communicate a sense of outcome, goal, or direction that attracts followers.
2. Management of meaning: The ability to create and communicate meaning with clarity and understanding.
3. Management of trust: The ability to be reliable and consistent.
4. Management of self: The ability to know one's self and to use one's skills within the limits of one's strengths and weaknesses.¹¹

Since the trait-approach research wasn't able to yield strong evidence linking successful leadership with a list of specific attributes, theorists began to gather data about leader behavior using attitudinal approaches (questionnaires/survey methods). There were a number of efforts that fell into this category (i.e. the Ohio State Studies, the Michigan State Studies, Likert's Studies, and the Leadership Grid). While each has its own approach or style, they all basically try to measure the leader's attitude towards the task at hand and the people performing the task.

Situational leadership approaches try to determine the causal relationships leading to predictable behavior. This approach examines the interplay among the leader, the follower, and the situation. For most leaders, focusing the right amount of energy on completion of the task can be a challenge. Proper balance of the technical aspects and the human aspects of any organization is the mark of a good leader.

BUREAUCRATIC FORM OF ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

In its heyday, the bureaucratic organizational structure promised much for the world of business and government. Society was moving from an agrarian base to an industrial base. Since education and experience tended not to be as important or wide-spread in smaller pre-industrial organizations, it made sense to concentrate control and responsibility at the top of the newly emerging bureaucracies. In Busting Bureaucracy, Kenneth Johnston describes a number of promises put forth by the bureaucratic form; consistency was one of these promises. In the past, inconsistency was rampant in most organizations. Management had no rational basis for decision-making. The introduction of rules and sanctions for noncompliance ensured top management that the organization would be controlled by their decisions. The major components of bureaucracy include: division of labor, hierarchy of authority, rules and procedures, and impersonality.

Division of Labor

The Industrial Revolution provided fertile ground for specialized labor to demonstrate its true role in organizational efficiency. Adam Smith, an eighteenth-century economist, outlined the following three reasons division of labor increases production: 1) by dividing the task into smaller, specific steps, each worker is able to fully develop a specific set of skills, 2) the transition between steps or phases of the job

is reduced, and 3) specialization encourages the development and use of more efficient production equipment.

Hierarchy of Authority

In a bureaucracy, decision-making is centralized. This basically means that the top levels of management of the organization maintain tight control over the lower levels by approving goals, allocating budgets, and issuing orders, rewards, and punishments. "Hierarchycannot be eliminated. In many organizations today, the villain is not hierarchy *per se*, but *bureaucracy*—a system of administration marked by officialism, red tape and proliferation....Hierarchy ensures that everyone in the organization understands *who makes the final call* on unresolved issues."¹² Lower levels have mastery of a narrow array of skills, but cannot integrate objectives and resources as general managers can. In bureaucracies, management is one more specialized skill expected of a small group of workers.

Rules and Procedures

In a bureaucracy, rules are typically formal written statements that outline acceptable and unacceptable choices and behaviors of members of the organization. In a mechanistic organization, these rules are established to handle tasks, situations, and decisions. Rather than rules for the exceptions, rules are established whenever possible to handle high frequency, low impact situations. Procedures are typically a set of rules that are established and used in a certain sequence. Like rules, procedures are often established at the top and generally outline the negative consequences associated with non-compliance.

Impersonality

To achieve greater objectivity when making hiring, salary, and promotion decisions, a highly mechanistic bureaucracy is likely to treat employees in a detached manner. "In the pursuit of equal treatment of everyone, we have created a system that demands that one size fit all, and in the pursuit of certainty, we have created a system that attempts to cover every eventuality, spelling everything out in excruciating detail.... but the world is neither all one size nor all that certain. Things change constantly, conditions vary, and human judgment is crucial to making things work."¹³ On the other hand, uniform rules and practices allow an organization and its management to remain impartial in their application.

Principles of Change

"The principles on which we have built our major government and business organizations – division of labor, specialization, standardization, clear hierarchy, individual accountability, interchangeable parts and people – produce a highly fragmented organization, keyed to separation: separation between departments, separation between line and staff, separation from its customers, separation from its suppliers and vendors."¹⁴ "Originally conceived as an efficient organizing device for performing complex,

large-scale tasks, modern bureaucratic organizations often seem to lose sight of their purpose amid masses of red tape.”¹⁵

Many defense agencies continue to organize around functions that may no longer exist nor be appropriate. When an organization changes its focus -- what it does -- it must re-form the organization into the best design to achieve its goals. Until organizations understand that successful change efforts can take upwards of ten years, these efforts are doomed to fail. Defense organizations, in particular, continue to face a high failure rate because senior leadership is typically military and assignments generally don't last any longer than five years. Using Lewin's model of the change process for example, typically an organization can accomplish step one: unfreezing. Individuals can be taught or shown why the change is needed. Step two, the change itself, can be implemented. Step three, refreezing, is generally where the change effort fails. In a military leadership environment, the time required to reinforce and support the change is not available to any one leader. The bureaucracy itself is so closely linked to the organizational culture that people easily revert back to their original behavior once there is a break in commitment from the top leadership.

LINKING THESE FACTORS

In his classic work, Organizational Culture and Leadership, Edgar Schein shows leadership and culture are basically intertwined. He contends that leadership can be used as a tool to manage organizational culture change. “Culture is created in the first instance by the actions of leaders; culture is embedded and strengthened by leaders. When culture becomes dysfunctional, leadership is needed to help the group unlearn some of its cultural assumptions and learn new assumptions.”¹⁶

Warren Bennis echoes this sentiment in his book, On Becoming a Leader. Bennis asserts that leadership is a form of change management. “Learning to lead is, on one level, learning to manage change...the organization acts on philosophy, carries out the mission, and the culture takes on a life of its own, becoming more cause than effect. But unless the leader continues to evolve, to adapt and adjust to external change, the organization will sooner or later stall.”¹⁷

While leadership in any business environment is challenging, leadership in a military environment requires a certain “je ne sais quoi.” There have been many studies in military character and leadership written over the years. Edgar Puryear examines the leadership styles of George Patton, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Douglas MacArthur, and George C. Marshall in his classic work, Nineteen Stars. This study points out that unlike most other professionals, the military leader has little or no opportunity to practice his craft before he is called upon to execute an order. “More than most professions, the military is forced to depend upon intelligent interpretation of the past for signposts charting the future. Devoid of opportunity, in peace, for self-instruction through actual practice of his profession, the soldier makes maximum use of historical record in assuring the readiness of himself and his command to function efficiently in emergency. The facts derived from historical analyses, he applies to conditions of the

present and to proximate future, thus developing a synthesis of approximate method, organization, and doctrine.”¹⁸

Since the military officer has little opportunity to practice his skills, one way a leader can stack the deck in his favor is to know himself well. This may not guarantee success, but most assuredly his odds of winning are increased. In Moving Mountains, Lt. General William Pagonis quotes the ancient Chinese warrior and poet, Sun Tzu. “Know the enemy and know yourself; in a hundred battles you will never be in peril. When you are ignorant of the enemy but know yourself, your chances of winning or losing are equal. If ignorant of both your enemy and yourself, you are certain in every battle to be in peril.”¹⁹

In addition to knowing himself, the military leader’s relationship with his men is crucial. According to Colonel Larry Donnithorne (Ret), “the core of our programs is more than strategy and vision: It’s the philosophy and the practice of a set of values. Standing in the mud with your people, learning their work, staying with their problems until solutions are found – these derive from the basic values of leadership taught at the Academy.”²⁰

Some leadership theorists assert that leadership and management are like two sides of the same coin. On one side you can see a certain set of attributes. On the other side, you can see another set of attributes. The coin derives its value from both sides. If one looks at leadership as a means of achieving organizational goals effectively and management as a mechanism to maintain the efficiency of these goals, balancing these two facets becomes the challenge. Taken together, leadership and management could be exactly the tools an organization can use to be both efficient and effective. In his Harvard Business Review article entitled “*What Leaders Really Do*”, John Kotter counters “Leadership is different from management...leadership and management are two distinctive and complementary systems of action. Each has its own function and characteristic activities.”²¹

Warren Bennis goes on to further differentiate between leadership and management. “..leadership revolves around vision, ideas, direction, and has more to do with inspiring people as to direction and goals than with day to day implementation..One can’t lead unless he can leverage more than his own capabilities...you have to be capable of inspiring other people to do things without actually sitting on top of them with a checklist – which is management, not leadership.”²²

In Breaking Through Bureaucracy, Michael Barzelay recognizes that leadership and management must co-exist in order for organizations to survive. However, he asserts that re-examining how we manage our people and other resources will lead to organizational improvements. Successful management reform asserts that the overly bureaucratic organization of the past cannot continue to be successful in the future. Organizations are undergoing such profound change that the stable practices of the past can’t weather the storm. “No small group of managers can possibly know enough, or generate enough creative ideas, to achieve organizational competitiveness...shifted from tight control to motivating employee commitment, tapping employee knowledge, and unleashing employee ingenuity...leaders increasingly seek to involve lower levels in their organization in decision-making responsibilities.”²³

Through review of existing literature and personal experiences, this study attempts to illustrate the relationship between organizational culture, military leadership, and bureaucracy in an effort to provide defense agency leadership with the insights required to be successful in the 21st century.

FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MILITARY AND CIVILIAN LEADERSHIP

Using the coin analogy once more, the coin has no value unless both sides are intact. The proper balance of leadership and management is an organization's ultimate challenge. Typically, leadership is touted as those skills employed by top executives that paint the picture of where the organization is headed. Management, on the other hand, consists of those things which need to be done to get there. "Direction without means is feckless, and means without direction is aimless. The two --leadership and management-- are inseparable...Increasing efficiency is no substitute for enhancing effectiveness. To be effective.., you must lead and manage."²⁴

Whether military or civilian, the goals of an organization's top leaders should be to increase efficiency (management) and maximize organizational effectiveness (leadership). Efficiency is described as making prudent use of various inputs to create the maximum output. Effectiveness focuses on whether the specific organizational goals have been achieved. Looking at leadership and management as the group of activities performed, in whole or in part, by various officers at different levels in an organization reduces the need to differentiate between the two.

While further distinguishing between leadership and management is unnecessary, the main thrust of this study is to outline some of the major differences between military and civilian leadership.

Former Superintendent of West Point, General Dave Palmer, said "Give me anyone, anyone except a schizophrenic, and I'll turn him into a leader."²⁵ He is basically stating that the Academy can train anyone to be a leader. "The whole purpose of leadership is simply to accomplish a task. That may sound too simple, but that's what a leader is expected to do. He gets a TASK in the form of a mission or order, and then he gets that task done through the efforts of his followers."²⁶ This quote was taken from a leadership guide developed by an Army Colonel specifically for small unit leaders and is issued to every Army Captain, Lieutenant, and Sergeant given the opportunity to become a small unit leader. This book describes how small unit leaders are taught to lead through a simple process of show, do, monitor and repeat.

Military leaders are taught to use every interaction with a subordinate as an opportunity to teach. Military leaders understand that their most important resource in getting the job done is the men in their unit. Training subordinates is an integral part of a formal structured plan to develop the skills needed to perform the job.

"Out of absolute necessity, the armed forces create true leaders of teams, people who develop subordinates, and who make decisions and take action based on information supplied by the people they oversee. Contrary to popular belief, the military model encourages team contributions and builds confidence among a group while retaining accountability -- a key component that is too often lost in today's corporate teams."²⁷

In the civilian world, the process of leadership development varies across government organizations. Years ago, leadership and/or management training in advance of promotion were frowned upon by government organizations. There were many that cited equal opportunity as an obstacle to strategic leadership development. Basically, the premise was that if an organization provided leadership or management training to a specific high-potential individual, it was considered grooming the person for a future position in management (a promotion). The result of not being able to train a person, in advance, meant that the selected candidate's leadership skills often were not polished or even tested. Essentially, the new leader practiced leadership behaviors on his or her new staff.

The Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 put into motion a series of management changes that have taken a long time to filter down to individual managers. It has only been over the last few years that government organizations have begun to realize that advance training in areas such as management and leadership, teambuilding, cultural diversity, quality, and business process reengineering have a direct, positive impact on organizational effectiveness.

It has been noted that a distinct difference between the way the military practice leadership and the way civilians practice leadership is the process. It is evident from the military leadership research materials, literature, and conversations that the armed forces recognize that leadership is a skill that threads up from the non-commissioned officer to a general. The depth and breadth of these skills may vary at each of the levels but virtually all soldiers, seamen, and airmen have the opportunity to practice leadership skills throughout their military careers. Career civil servants, on the other hand, may have sporadic opportunities to learn leadership skills and are rarely encouraged to practice them

LEADERSHIP PRACTICES

TEAMWORK

One thing that truly stands out in the military culture is teamwork. While at times the final product may appear effortless, there is a lot that goes on behind the scenes in preparing a group of people to be a team. Putting individual skills together to accomplish the mission is the crux of military teamwork. The leverage brought to the table by a high performing team is incredible. With skill and will, an army stands a good chance of winning the battle even outnumbered. "What won on this newer battlefield was skill and will and TEAMWORK. And it was discovered on countless battlefields.... that an army of a hundred men who could work together as a combined arms team could whip the daylights out of an army of a thousand men who couldn't."²⁸

Labeling a group of people as a team is one of the greatest mistakes an organization can make. Just as the military recognize leadership must be taught and reinforced, teamwork must also be taught and positively reinforced. In the past, students may recall teachers saying ---do your own work ---no cheating---etc. Collaboration in the workplace has only recently become the expected way of conducting business more effectively.

During the late 1980s, many defense agencies spent a lot of money on Total Quality Management (TQM) efforts. Quality circles were established and teamwork was encouraged. These efforts, like many before them, were not properly fostered by changing the way people behaved or were rewarded. In some agencies, they eventually went by the wayside.

A recent trend in some defense agencies is to form Process Action Teams. These teams are assembled to examine a specific business process or solve a specific problem. In 1997, one defense agency formed a Process Action Team to examine the communications problems between labor and management. The team was given the charter to formulate recommendations to improve the communications problems without the authority to make the required changes. This gave the team the impression that higher management really didn't trust them to do a good job. In addition, the management liaison to the team had little or no understanding of his role in the effort. This typifies the notion that many organizations continue to implement teamwork initiatives without laying the proper groundwork required for the gradual shift to a team-based culture.

"Ultimately, there is one element most often missing from corporate teams that contributes directly to less-than-optimal performance: leadership. Military Officers bring true leadership to their teams instead of just management. Their whole focus is on developing people. In business, the focus is to make the product and make a profit, using people to do it. But if the approach becomes how to develop the people, then the product and profit will take care of itself."²⁹

FOLLOWERSHIP

"Popular management literature on leadership often forgets that leadership can only exist as a complement to subordinateship. Authority survives only where matched by obedience."³⁰ One message that is expressed loud and clear in all the military leadership literature is the notion of followership; subordinating one's own desires for the greater good of the team, platoon, or squadron. The military teaches that every leader reports to a greater authority. There is no supreme leader. Even the President of the United States reports to the people in one form or another. "...followership and leadership are two separate concepts, two separate roles. They are complementary, not competitive, paths to organizational contribution. Neither role corners the market on brains, motivation, talent, or action...The greatest successes require that the people in both roles turn in top-rate performances."³¹

Each cadet at West Point learns early in his or her experiences where the fine line between the individual's authority and that of the Academy. The Academy accomplishes this task by taking all cadets back to ground zero. "...they must understand they are becoming a part of something much bigger than they are -- an institution, with a set of rules and traditions, and a great mission for the country. These leaders-in-training need to know the extent of their own limitations before they can begin to grow further as leaders."³²

In the past, in the civilian world, following hasn't been identified as a key competency to success in the workplace. In 1997, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) made a long awaited decision to

revamp the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for federal executives to do their jobs. These federal executives are commonly labeled as members of the Senior Executive Service (SES). In military terms, they hold the rank equivalent to a General Officer. The five new executive core qualifications are as follows: Leading Change, Leading People, Business Acumen, Results Driven, and Building Coalitions/Communications. They now better reflect the human element necessary for successful leadership. To illustrate, the original executive core qualification two, Human Resources Management, was changed to Leading People.

While followership isn't specifically designated as an executive core qualification, there are a few key characteristics included in the Leading People category that could facilitate followership. These include empowering people by sharing power and authority and developing leadership in others through coaching and mentoring. A recent trend in some agencies is the increasing numbers of SES members transferring from one defense agency to another defense agency. One departing SES member commented that while his most recent move increased his level of responsibility and authority, the reason he left was his former agency's apparent lack of understanding and appreciation of followers. He recognizes the role of the follower in leadership. Without followers, there is no one to lead. "Followers at their best...participate with enthusiasm, intelligence, and self-reliance – but without star billing – in pursuit of organizational goals. Far from the stereotype of passive sheep, they are linked together by their individual decisions to make a personal dream or a common dream become a reality."³³ His courage to leave demonstrates his commitment to leadership and all that it entails. Some civilian leaders naturally inspire others. This is the first step in creating an environment where following the leader is inevitable.

EMPOWERMENT

One mechanism used to inspire followership is the idea of empowerment. In the military, the term "powering down" is used to describe loosening centralized control. In the form of pushing the decision-making down to the lowest level leader, the military gives the leader the tools he or she needs to do the job. Included with authority and responsibility is the concept of accountability. While accountability may scare some people, it shows the leader that higher management trusts its subordinates. In many defense agencies, responsibility is often given to a lower level leader but often authority and accountability are withheld. This imbalance is detrimental to the employee's development because it often demonstrates to the employee that higher management has little or no confidence in its subordinates. "Leaders must build subordinates who take responsibility for their own actions and are capable of independent action. That is the real sense of empowerment – not just the freedom to do one's job but the freedom to define it. Empowerment is not about power at all; it is about responsibility."³⁴

"Getting people to assume greater responsibility is not easy. Not only are many lower-level employees comfortable being told what to do, but many managers are accustomed to treating subordinates like machinery requiring control. Letting people take the initiative in defining and solving

problems means management needs to learn to support rather than control. Workers, for their part, need to learn to take responsibility.”³⁵

COMMUNICATION

The primary mechanism for information flow in the military is the chain of command. “It spells out who has authority to issue orders to whom. It identifies for anyone, at any level, who is in charge. More important, it also identifies who is responsible for getting tasks done and for taking care of those who do them.”³⁶ The purpose of this clear-cut mechanism for communication is to ensure that all the elements that make up the organism on the battlefield know what to do and when to do it. Obtaining, processing, and moving information are the three activities associated with the chain of command. Leaders, at all levels, are responsible for all these elements. Military leaders don’t wait for information, they go after it. While there may be subtle differences in how the chain of command is perceived during peacetime and war, it is essential that military leaders know how to properly work this chain. The chain is not optional.

In a defense agency, the battlefield can be very far removed from the day-to-day office environment. It can be difficult for a civilian employee who has little or no military experience to understand the need for a structure as rigid as the chain of command. In many defense agencies, the senior leadership is, in fact, military. While there are many civilian senior executives, the top job is usually reserved for a high ranking military officer. The chain of command is also used in civilian organizations. While seemingly not as important to follow as in a military environment, civil servants learn quickly that if they want to obtain information or distribute vital mission information, they must use it. Other types of information travel on the agency grapevine. It can be an accurate source of information sometimes providing very rich details and typically paralleling the information flowing through the chain. “....often neglected by managers....Grapevines grow primarily to meet organizational members’ innate need for information....it is 70 to 90 percent accurate in content, and travels at an extremely rapid pace.”³⁷

MOTIVATION

Another area where leadership styles differ is in motivating employees. If motivation is at the root of why people do things, aligning the organization’s goals with the individual’s goals should produce results.

“Maximum effort is obtained when soldiers are working toward unit goals that also achieve their own needs. Soldiers can be motivated internally, as well as externally, by a leader. To use motivation effectively, leaders need to recognize that: soldiers are complex and variable; they change their behavior over time (not overnight); they look for variety in their work; they want to do worthwhile things (like training); and they react differently to leadership practices. KNOWING YOUR MEN takes a lot of listening, watching, thinking. Do it well, and you can motivate.”³⁸

There are many examples in military history where the leaders concern for his troops turned a negative situation around. For example, during the Civil War, in the battle of Little Round Top, Colonel Joshua Chamberlain’s regiment was running out of ammunition, he was outnumbered and one third of his

unit had previously tried to desert the Union Army. He was able to turn the group around by simply asking them if they'd had anything to eat lately. "He treated them well, like real people, not like deserters. The moral: that kind of sincere act goes a long way toward wooing an unhappy worker over to your side."³⁹

Civilians aren't much different from soldiers. They are also people with recognition and affiliation needs. While some soldiers may be motivated by the idea of receiving a medal, many civilians would probably flourish in their work environment if leadership would occasionally say thank you. In one agency, a branch chief was always able to get her employees to work harder under short deadlines or extreme emergencies. This woman had the innate ability to inspire trust and commitment and a willingness to sacrifice personal needs for the sake of the mission. She was able to make her employees want to do a good job. Simple acts of kindness were her secret weapon. Each time she'd ask an employee to do something above and beyond what was expected, shortly thereafter, she would take the employee to lunch, write a personal thank you note, or leave a flower on the employee's desk. Each employee felt special and willingly gave one hundred and ten percent.

ENVIRONMENTAL VARIABLES

Some differences between leading in the military and leading civilian employees are a direct result of external environmental variables over which neither group has much control. In the civilian world, most leaders have a lot to say when it comes to selecting and hiring employees. They usually recruit people with specific skills to perform a job that is identified as needed. In the military, the leader receives a group of soldiers with minimal input to the selection, if any. They may or may not have the skills required to do the job. It is up to the leader to do what is necessary to ensure the troops achieve acceptable performance in the most expedient manner possible. While it may be difficult to fire a civilian employee, it can be done. On the contrary, soldiers can't easily quit or be fired.

The military and the government civilian employment contracts also vary. In the military, there is a direct relationship between leadership, promotion, and retention. Military leaders are typically identified early in their careers and their efficiency reports (performance appraisals) reflect the appropriate praises. As an officer progresses through his or her military career, promotions are made by promotion boards based on these efficiency reports. Once an officer is passed over for promotion a certain number of times, he or she is asked to retire or leave military service. This is not so for government civilians. Not only are promotions not necessarily linked to leadership ability or potential, they have little to do with employee retention. Some employees often feel that they don't necessarily have to work very hard to draw a paycheck. They cite their number of years of service and the complex paperwork required to dismiss them as reasons for their job security. The documentation required to track unsatisfactory civilian employee performance can be so daunting that many managers often opt to do nothing. "The existing civil service system, quite simply, contains far too few incentives for high performance and far too many incentives for workers to take the safer, lower-risk path."⁴⁰

Another marked difference between military work life and civilian work life is the relationship between the leader and his or her men. A military leader influences the service member's time twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. While some civilian leaders may have a strong personal relationship with some of their employees, their relationship is typically not as cohesive as a military leader's relationship with the members in his or her unit. While difficult to imagine perhaps, the military leader may have an almost paternal relationship with his charges. This is perhaps a great contributor to the reasons why the military have such a strong sense of commitment to one another and their service.

SUMMARY

One can see from the examples provided that there are fundamental differences between military and civilian leadership. One important distinction is the cohesion within the military culture as opposed to the civilian bureaucracy. Strong cultures usually reflect strong cohesion among members. Defense agencies can generally be considered bureaucratic organizations. Bureaucracies tend to be impersonal. This impersonality often detracts from attempts at cohesion. Cohesion by its very nature implies a certain intimacy among the membership. For members of a group to be intimate and impersonal simultaneously is not possible.

While many of the leadership practices are similar in nature, the level of maturity of these practices reflects the culture (military or civilian) in which they exist. In the equation of task performance and human resources (mission and men), the military officer learns early in his or her leadership development that aligning the individual's goals with the organization's goals increases the probability of successful task outcomes. The cohesive nature of the relationship between a military leader and his unit may enhance the human aspects of their interactions. By no means is this meant to imply that the military leader sacrifices the mission goals for the sake of the his troops but rather, whenever possible, he or she considers the human element equally in the decision-making process.

The recently refined SES core qualifications promise to move the next generation of civilian executives to a greater awareness of the human element. In particular, the Leading Change, Leading People, and Building Coalitions/Communications core qualifications magnify the need to better energize and utilize the talents of the follower.

This chapter illustrates some of the differences between military and civilian leadership. This examination was conducted in the context of two environments: the military organization and the defense agency. The next chapter will describe some of the major differences between the civilian and military systems.

MILITARY AND CIVILIAN DIFFERENCES

Edgar Schein describes culture as "a basic pattern of assumptions – invented, discovered, or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration..."⁴¹ By applying this definition to military service members and defense agency employees, one can readily see that the given group (military or civilian) experience vastly different cultures. While often found working together in a civilian bureaucracy, each group has its own beliefs, rituals, values, heroes, and cultural assumptions.

VOCATION VS. AVOCATION

Webster's dictionary defines vocation as an urge or predisposition to undertake a certain kind of work – a calling. The military culture is often referred to as a way of life. Military service members consider the decision to serve their country a calling.

Civilian employment, on the other hand, is normally considered an avocation – one's regular work or profession. For some, the thought of retiring from government civil service is a less attractive option than it was years ago. In 1984, the government replaced the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) with the Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS). This retirement plan is portable and encourages limited loyalty to the organization. Government employees are less likely to consider themselves shackled to their current government job by "golden handcuffs." Eliminating the possibility of losing the government pension has enabled government employees to move in and out of public sector employment, thus emphasizing the "it's only a job" attitude. As more and more military and civilian work together, this difference between the military way of life and a civilian job can sometimes lead to friction in the workplace.

Military culture is strongly family-oriented. Military leaders are taught early to balance the welfare of the men with the success of the mission. By extension, the welfare of the service member's family is just as important. It is not uncommon for a military leader to know such things as the member's marital status, serious medical problems, and children's names. This is in stark contrast to the military leader's knowledge base regarding his civilians. Due to the often impersonal nature of bureaucratic organizations, civilian employees are generally not as forthcoming with personal information. Reticent civilian employees sometimes impede a military leader's efforts to get to know them better. For a military leader raised in a familial working atmosphere, this rebuff can sometimes sting.

When viewed as a way of life, military culture offers many opportunities to tighten common bonds between its members. Often a military unit spends much more time together than a typical civilian group of workers. Webster's dictionary defines coherence as the quality or state of logical or orderly relationships of parts. Whether a single unit, family, or entire military community, seeking cohesion is an integral part of the military's culture. Often military leaders of civilian organizations find fewer

opportunities to develop social bonds with their civilian subordinates. One element that can strengthen a culture's cohesion is leadership based on values.

VALUES

Regardless of Military Service, values are emphasized as the ties that bind. The goal is not to settle on a finite list of agreed upon values but rather to bring to the organization leadership that is based on principles. Throughout most of the military literature and observations, decisions rooted in fundamental values have been the theme. "Shared values express the essence of an organization. They bind expectations, provide alignment, and establish a foundation for transformation and growth. By emphasizing values, the leader signals what will not change, providing an anchor for people drifting in a sea of uncertainty and a strategic context for decision and actions that will grow the organization."⁴²

There does not seem to be as great an emphasis on organizational values in civilian bureaucracies. Even when organizational values are posted on the walls, how the organization's members behave is often in conflict with these espoused values. It was observed in one defense agency that one of its stated values was "People are our most valuable asset." This statement was difficult for the employees to believe when their input to management was routinely ignored, morale was very low, and employee development and training was non-existent. "Values give an organization a self-ordering quality, a kind of organizational ballast, which provides direction and stability in periods of turmoil, stress, and change.... Effective leaders understand that core values rooted deeply within people who make up an organization are the essence of its organizational culture and an enormous source of strength."⁴³ In effect, military services constantly reinforce stated values through training, practice, and reward systems, while civilian organizations often simply state values and leave it at that.

PERSONNEL SYSTEMS

One major contributor to the difference between each group's beliefs, values, and cultural assumptions is the different personnel management systems (See Figure 2⁴⁴). Most military leaders are very familiar with their own personnel management system. The civilian personnel management system is often cited as a major obstacle to the military leader's ability to effectively manage, mentor, or lead civilian employees. "By and large....the military officer is not familiar with their personnel system, and he will need some help and tutoring...Colonel Bill Aldrich....said learning the civilian personnel system was one of the biggest challenges when he first started supervising civilians..."⁴⁵ The civilian personnel management system is probably not the actual problem. The military leader's lack of understanding of how to manage and apply civilian personnel rules can often lead to friction between military and civilian personnel.

<u>MILITARY SYSTEM</u>	<u>CIVILIAN SYSTEM</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Rank in person o Recruiting – Fill Force Structure o Promotion from within o Centralized Management o Mandatory Mobility o Training primarily for Leadership and Military Skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Rank in job o Recruiting – Fill Force Position Vacancy o Promotion from within plus external recruitment o Decentralized Management o Voluntary Mobility o Training primarily occupationally oriented

FIGURE 1 - DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MILITARY AND CIVILIAN SYSTEMS

RECRUITMENT

Another difference between military and civilian systems is how and where the input (military recruit or civilian employee) enters the system and eventually becomes a productive member of the organization. On the military side, there is usually only one entry point into the system: the bottom. Military service members usually start at the bottom of the structure and work their way up through a series of training events and on-the-job training. The results are usually pay raises and rank achievement. The manner in which the military organization cares for its human resources is like a systems lifecycle. "Military career management is based on the concept of lifecycle management that consists of eight personnel management functions: structure, acquisition, individual training and education, distribution, sustainment, professional development, and separation."⁴⁶

The civilian personnel management system takes a different approach. Civilian employees can enter the system at any point. They can start at the bottom, middle, or top. They can be hired into any position for which they possess the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities. This is a key difference between the military and civilian systems. Since the focus is on the occupational skills of the job and not on the individual employee, training and education of civilian employees are often overlooked. Civilians may languish for decades in the position to which they were hired, while service members who do not acquire the skills viewed as necessary to frequent promotion are ejected from the military.

DUTY HOURS

Civilian employees are paid hourly. Typically, this is ten eight-hour days or some variation that does not exceed eighty hours in a two week period. Because overtime and compensatory time (future time off) must be approved and budgeted in advance, civilian employees are conditioned to work no more than eight hours a day unless an emergency arises. Military members are paid a specific salary each month and are expected to be available (theoretically) twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. This difference alone can lead to conflict in the office setting. Due to the complex nature of the Civilian Personnel Management System (CPMS), some military leaders delegate civilian employee decisions to the Civilian Personnel Office (CPO). If the military leader is not familiar with the personnel systems differences, this friction can be exacerbated. This is sometimes demonstrated by civilian employees' low

morale that can often be attributed to their perception that they are less important than the military members are.

It has been routinely noted in some defense agencies that civilian employees are often considered less dedicated because of their perceived "clockwatching" behavior. Military leaders who are unfamiliar with the rules surrounding civilian employee hours of duty can sometimes cause internal work unit conflicts by expecting civilians to be available far beyond the usual 40 hour work week.

During particularly slow work periods or the Friday before a long weekend, military personnel are often encouraged to leave work early to pursue personal interests such as spending time with their family or physical fitness activities. While this may be because they are available twenty-four hours, seven days a week, the civilian employee may view the early release as an unfair advantage to the service member. The only way a civilian employee can leave early is if he or she takes annual leave (vacation time). While both personnel management systems have their own nuances, it is often the leader's lack of understanding of these systems and the different cultural basis of the systems that continues to cause major turmoil in the workplace.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The military leader must budget for civilian employee training. The local organization has to absorb the costs and endure the loss of productivity if it elects to send a civilian employee to long-term training. If the local organization opts not to send the civilian employee to the training, the employee sometimes feels slighted and not particularly valued by the military leader.

Since education and training are part of the lifecycle of military service member's development, there are generally fewer problems associated with sending a military member to training. In the military system, it is easier for service members to attend training en route to the next assignment. It isn't quite as easy for the civilian sector because their careers are not centrally managed by their personnel system. "If you look at our system for the civilian workforce, it is not remotely equivalent to what we provide our military members or military dependents. Our civilian workforce is trained and educated in a variety of ways or not at all." ⁴⁷

MOBILITY

Mobility is another key difference between the military culture and civilian bureaucracy. As military members progress through their careers, they are expected to move every two to four years. While the service member often has input into the reassignment, the Service generally determines the timing. This can be a source of great stress to both the service member and his or her family. The mobility issue for civilians is one of desire or ambition. The when and where of a job reassignment is typically up to the civilian employee. If a civilian wants to progress in his or her career, mobility is often the method used. For civilians, it is normally a voluntary decision, while the military member consents to mandatory mobility when he or she joins the service.

SEPARATION

The last step in both personnel systems is separating the employee. A civilian employee can typically retire under one of two retirement plans. Under CSRS, the employee is eligible to retire at thirty years of service and fifty-five years of age. Under FERS, the employee is eligible to retire at fifty-seven years of age providing a number of other requirements are met. For a military member to retire, he or she needs to achieve a minimum of twenty years of service. There is a distinct chasm between the military and civilian retirement approaches.

The civilian is required to work until fifty-five years of age or older depending on the number of years of service. The military service member could conceivably retire at thirty-eight years old. This difference could possibly contribute to the wide variety of attitudes about retirement.

SUMMARY

There are many obvious and subtle differences between the military culture and civilian bureaucratic cultures. The focus should not be on trying to meld the two culture's values and beliefs but rather to focus on the areas of commonality. "...if we have to wait until all peoples share the same cultural values we will wait forever. Common practices, not common values, are what solve practical problems. The differences in values should be understood, the differences in practices should be resolved."⁴⁸ For the military and civilian relationship to improve, greater awareness and understanding between the cultures needs to be achieved.

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

SUMMARY

Chapter one introduced the three factors affecting the ability of a defense agency to be effective and highlighted some of the information available which links together aspects of organizational culture, military leadership, and bureaucratic form. The examples provided illustrated that the three factors woven together can be used to provide defense agency leadership with the insights necessary to succeed in the next century.

Chapter two outlined some of the fundamental differences between military and civilian leadership practices. One important distinction is that the military culture is generally much more cohesive than civilian bureaucracies. Civilian bureaucracies are typically impersonal. This impersonality often detracts from attempts at cohesion. Cohesion by its very nature implies a certain intimacy among the membership. For members of a civilian organization to be simultaneously intimate and impersonal could create conflict.

Chapter three illustrated some of the major differences between the military and civilian personnel management systems and emphasized that the focus should not be on trying to meld the civilian and military cultures but rather to identify some common ground the leadership can use to strengthen organizational effectiveness.

Chapter four summarizes the intent of the research paper, provides general and specific recommendations, and concludes with highlighting cultural awareness as a critical ingredient to effectively preparing military officers to lead predominantly civilian organizations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In the 1996 Student Research Paper entitled "Military Leadership of Civilian Personnel: Achieving a Balance", the authors point out that problems with military leadership of civilian personnel are not new. In fact, they have been highlighted in numerous reports to include the 1986 Army Inspector General report as well as the 1992 Civilian Leadership Development Plan. "After ten years of effort in DA to address these issues, interviews with staff members at various government agencies and civilian and military students at senior service colleges indicate that many areas still need improvement."⁴⁹

There are numerous things the Military Services can do to better prepare military officers to lead predominantly civilian organizations.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Military leaders should be given the opportunity to learn as much as they can about the civilian environment before they arrive. Some ways to achieve this include 1) updating Senior Service School curricula with Civilian Personnel Management System training modules, 2) offering electives related to civilian specific issues, 3) requiring the military officer to attend the forty hour supervisory training course required for civilian managers, and 4) requiring attendance at a civilian-oriented training course en route to his or her defense agency assignment.
- Whenever possible, the Military Services should send officers to civilian organizations repeatedly. This would enable the military leader to hone his or her skills in leading civilians by having additional opportunities to demonstrate leadership qualities and behaviors.
- Add a performance element to the Officer Evaluation Report (OER) that requires the military leader to understand the Civilian Personnel Management System and demonstrate the ability to lead a civilian workforce.

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Communicate the vision.** This statement applies to all leaders, both military and civilian. By making clear exactly where he plans to take the organization, the military leader can demonstrate a sense of purpose to his subordinates. He can also outline exactly what kind of support he needs to achieve it. The military leader must consider his civilian work force as competent, productive members of his team. This attitude can send a strong positive message to the work force. If given the opportunity, most civilian employees will prove themselves as an important tool in the military leader's arsenal. "The nuts and bolts of leadership. More is called for than technique. You have to know where you're going, to be able to state it clearly and consistently – and you have to care about it passionately. That all adds up to vision, the concise statement/picture of where the company and its people are headed."⁵⁰
- **Increase/Improve Interpersonal Relations.** The military leader in charge of civilians must take the time to get to know his employees better. By increasing his awareness of employee concerns, the military leader demonstrates his concern for their welfare. He should make it clear to his immediate staff that improvements in interpersonal communications are important. If necessary, he and his staff should obtain the training to achieve this goal. The military leader who is tuned into his environment by noticing things such as high employee turnover, increased sick leave usage, excessive absenteeism, and a rise in grievance and complaints is better prepared to address these problems. He must insist upon honesty and candor from his employees without repercussions.
- **Obtain employee perceptions.** The military leader can draw on his interpersonal communications skills to solicit employee perceptions of the organization as well as his leadership. If the employees feel their opinions are valued and their needs are met, their perceptions of the organization should be positive. There are several ways the military leader can obtain this valuable employee feedback.

Some leaders have “coffee with the commander” chats every month. During these chats, non-supervisory personnel are encouraged to share their concerns and suggestions regarding the organization’s policies and related personnel issues. This gives the military leader crucial information about current problems or potential problems facing the organization. Another technique used by some leaders is Management By Walking Around (MBWA). Basically, this means the leader goes to the employees’ work area to observe and to have informal conversations with the workers in their environment.

- **Know the civilian personnel rules.** Part of the military leader’s responsibility to his employees, both military and civilian, is to know the rules of each of the personnel systems. If the military leader has had Civilian Personnel Management Systems training prior to his assignment, this should be relatively easy. If not, the military leader should spend some time with the Civilian Personnel Office understanding what the rules are governing issues such as performance, discipline, and duty hours. “...the civilian workforce you are managing is tenured....That means your employees have substantial rights to their position and career. They cannot be moved around, or disciplined by whim.”⁵¹ If the military leader has mix of personnel, knowing the rules and explaining the reasons for the personnel systems differences can be very important to eliminating the “we/they” situations in the work place. Also, by knowing the rules, the military leader is better able to customize the solution to civilian and military personnel issues.
- **Recognize the importance of the performance appraisal.** Military leaders know how important the Officer Evaluation Report (OER) is to the advancement of military officers. Military leaders need to recognize and appreciate that the civilian performance appraisal is just as important to the civilian employee career. A military leader can immediately improve employee's perception if he treats their performance appraisal the way that he treats the military OER. As stated in the general recommendations, adding an element to the leader's OER regarding leading civilians could improve this situation.
- **Understand civilian career management responsibilities.** Military leaders need to be better prepared to carry out their responsibilities relating to civilian career development. It is the function of the supervisor (military or civilian) to assist the employee in developing his or her individual development plan (IDP). The IDP is the roadmap for employee growth and learning. It should include such items as occupational skills training, OJT opportunities, and leadership, management, and teamwork training. The military leader should spend time with the CPO to ensure he knows everything necessary to mentor and coach the civilian employee.
- **Educate and self-motivate.** It is up to the Military Services to provide the opportunity for military leaders to become more knowledgeable about their civilian work force. It is up to the individual military leader to take the initiative to better understand and appreciate the value of the civilian work force to the completing the mission in timely, efficient, and effective manner.

CONCLUSION

Cultural awareness of military and civilian differences can play a central role in a leader's ability to understand and cooperate with others in an effort to improve organizational efficiency and effectiveness. Organizations are full of examples of misunderstandings, primarily caused by the parties involved filtering interactions through their own "narrow" perspectives. "The military personnel system is glued together by obedience to authority. The civilian system is held together by a complex set of personnel regulations. In the Department of Defense, mixing the two systems frequently leads to misunderstanding, with members of both sides feeling unappreciated."⁵² "Understanding the differences in the ways...leaders and their followers think, feel, and act is a condition for bringing about worldwide solutions that work....One of the reasons why so many solutions do not work or cannot be implemented is because differences in thinking among partners have been ignored."⁵³

In order to develop a better understanding of an organization's culture, leaders should make a concerted effort to understand their personnel. One way to better understand them is described in the following quote.

"...to provide the members with enough common experiences to permit a communication system and a climate of trust to emerge. Such shared experiences can be obtained by ...encouraging members to get to know each other in more informal settings, or by going through some common training experiences...workshops serve not only to educate people about groups, but also to provide group members a common base of experience from which to build better working relationships."⁵⁴

This research paper examined the close relationship between organizational culture, military leadership, and bureaucracy. It has attempted to demonstrate that a greater understanding of these factors could better prepare defense agency leadership for the challenges of the next century. Heightening awareness of the cultural differences between the military and civilian work force could contribute to improvements in organizational efficiency and effectiveness. "If, as leaders, we do not develop a consciousness of the culture in which we are imbedded, the culture will manage us. While cultural understanding is desirable for everyone, it is vital to leaders if they are to lead."⁵⁵

As civilian organizations continue to downsize and military leaders continue to be assigned to senior leadership positions, it is critical for leadership to acknowledge and value the diversity of the human element and to develop and care for their subordinates, both military and civilian. Developing a better understanding of the relationship between organizational culture, military leadership, and bureaucracy could enable military leaders of defense agencies to enhance organizational efficiency and effectiveness.

Word Count: 10,651

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